

# SYPHILIS

Syphilis is a sexually-transmitted disease (STD) caused by a bacterium (*Treponema palladium*). It can spread from person to person by physical contact during vaginal, anal, or oral sex. Syphilis can also be spread from a mother to her unborn baby.

If you think you or your partner has syphilis, see your doctor, local clinic, or come to the SE STD Clinic and don't have sex.

If you have syphilis, tell your partners so they can be treated.

## *Symptoms*

- *Usually, symptoms show up 1-12 weeks after being exposed to syphilis.*
- *A painless sore on the penis, scrotum, vaginal lips, anus or mouth*
- *Rashes on the body especially on the palms and soles*
- *Swollen glands*
- *Hair falling out in patches*
- *These symptoms will go away even without treatment.*
- *In late syphilis the brain and heart may be affected.*

## How would I know if I have syphilis?

- If you have a sore on your genitals, have an STD check.
- A blood test for syphilis can be done.
- You could have syphilis and not know it
- Anytime you have tests for other STDs be sure and ask for a syphilis blood test also.

## How is syphilis treated?

- Syphilis can be treated with antibiotics. Penicillin "shots" are usually used.
- In early stages a single shot is often adequate. Multiple shots are usually used in later stages.
- Other antibiotics may be used in people with allergy to penicillin.

## How can I prevent from getting syphilis?

- Avoid unprotected sex. Always use condoms.
- Avoid infection by being monogamous, having only one sex partner.

SE STD Clinic  
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Clinic Hours: 8:15 a.m.-3:15 p.m.  
Monday – Friday